

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8070

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: HAMBURG SPD MEETING INDECISIVE

REF: BONN 14831

1. THE HAMBURG MEETING OF THE SPD (SEE REFTTEL) PRODUCED
EVEN LESS THAN THE LITTLE THAT WAS EXPECTED. BRANDT
WARNED HIS PARTY THAT INTERNAL DISSENSION COULD
SERIOUSLY DAMAGE SPD PROSPECTS IN COMING ELECTIONS AND
CALLED UPON THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE PARTY "INCLUDING
ITS LEADERSHIP GROUP" TO COOPERATE MORE FULLY. ALSO
BRANDT RECOMMENDED THE SCHEDULING OF A SPECIAL CON-
FERENCE IN EARLY 1974 TO DISCUSS SPD FOREIGN POLICY

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AIMS AND DISMISSED AS "NONSENSICAL" REPORTS THAT HE AND

WEHNER ARE AT ODDS. WEHNER TOO MADE A HALF-HEARTED AS WELL AS A CURIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO AT LEAST THE SHOW OF INTRA-PARTY TRANQUILITY BY DENYING THAT HIS COMMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS HEADLESS WAS DIRECTED AT BRANDT. HE DIDN'T SAY WHO ELSE COULD CONCEIVABLY FILL THE BILL.

2. REPORTS THAT SCHEEL AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE'S FRANK WOULD BE IN HAMBURG TO DISCUSS AREAS OF COMPETENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY WITH THE SPD LEADERSHIP WERE NOT DENIED BY THE FDP EARLIER BUT TURNED OUT NEVERTHELESS TO BE WRONG. A SOURCE CLOSE TO SCHEEL TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE IDEA HAD BEEN SPD IN ORIGIN AND HAD AS ITS SINGLE MOTIVE THE SMOOTHING OF RUFFLED SPD FEATHERS. SCHEEL HAD NEVER SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED GOING, APPARENTLY FEELING THAT TO HAVE ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THERE WERE AREAS OF FOREIGN POLICY OUTSIDE HIS COMPETENCE AS FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT THE DIVISION BETWEEN IDEOLOGUES AND PRAGMATISTS WITHIN THE SPD, EPITOMIZED IN THE ANGRY WEHNER-BRANDT FENCING OF RECENT WEEKS, HAS BEEN PAPERED OVER ONCE AGAIN. BUT WEHNER'S CHALLENGE TO BRANDT THIS TIME HAS BEEN SO DIRECT THAT THERE ARE RUMORS THAT BRANDT IS SEEKING TO BLOCK WEHNER'S RE-ELECTION AS FLOOR LEADER IN DECEMBER. HOWEVER, WE TEND TO DOUBT THIS WOULD OCCUR: IT WOULD NOT BE IN KEEPING WITH BRANDT'S USUAL TACTIC OF BLAND COMPROMISE. THE BEST BET, THEREFORE, IS THAT THE PATCH-UP JOB IN HAMBURG WILL SETTLE THE INTRA-PARTY SQUABBLE, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN.
HILLENBRAND

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